

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

CONSUMER TIME

T'AIN'T NECESSARILY SO!

NETWORK: NBC

DATE: August 10, 1946

ORIGIN: WRC

TIME: 12:15-12:30 PM EDST

(Produced by the United States Department of Agriculture
...this script is for reference only...and may not be
broadcast without special permission. The title CONSUMER
TIME is restricted to network broadcast of the program....
presented for more than thirteen years in the interest of
consumers.)

---000---

1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER RINGS TWICE...MONEY IN TILL
2. HOLLY: It's CONSUMER TIME!
3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER CLOSE DRAWER
4. ANNR.: During the next fifteen minutes, the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations make their facilities available for the presentation of CONSUMER TIME by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. And here are Mrs. Freyman and Holly Wright.
5. FREYMAN: Listen to these newspaper headlines, Holly. "Season for Ptomaine Poisoning Here"....."Pastry tested for Poisoning Four in Family" "Chicken Salad Suspected in Picnic Illness."
6. HOLLY: Yes, those are the headlines you read in the paper often these days, Mrs. Freyman. Too bad we have to go through it every summer.
7. FREYMAN: But we don't, Holly. That is...we don't if people know the simple facts about refrigerating foods correctly.
8. HOLLY: You mean to tell me it's as easy as that.....if you keep foods cold, you can avoid food poisoning?

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

9. FREYMAN: That's true for most kinds of food poisoning. Careless handling of food is the only thing to blame for many of the cases of food poisoning that occur every summer. But at the same time, some people are so ultra careful, that they waste perfectly good food....just because they think it looks suspicious.
10. HOLLY: Now wait a minute.... Let's get this straight. Seems to me you're talking about two different things..... foods that have gone bad and foods that people only think have gone bad.
11. FREYMAN: That's right. And since there are so many superstitious and false ideas about food that has "gone bad" as you call it.....we're going to have a special theme song for this edition of CONSUMER TIME.....
12. MUSIC: IT AIN'T NECESSARILY SO.....SNEAKS IN. HOLD IT UNDER
13. FREYMAN: Recognize it, Holly?
14. HOLLY: Sure....."It Ain't Necessarily So.".....a swell number..... if somewhat ungrammatical. But what's it got to do with ptomaine poisoning?
15. FREYMAN: There's a very definite connection, Holly.....as you'll see very soon.
16. MUSIC: UP AND OUT
17. ABBY: I'm certainly glad you dropped in for tea today, MarthaI wanted to tell you I really enjoyed myself at the picnic.....I'll have to admit it.
18. MARTHA: I told you you would, Abby. I think everybody had a good time.....and the food was so delicious. Why I heard Judge Green say your coconut custard pies were the best pies in the county.

19. ABBY: He ought to know.....he's tasted 'em all.
(More tea, Martha)
20. MARTHA: No thanks, Abbie.
21. ABBY: As a matter of fact, I never did get to eat any of those pies I made for the picnic.....but as long as Judge Green and his family seemed to like them..... I'm happy.
22. MARTHA: Speaking of the Greens.....isn't it a shame about how they took sick.....just about three hours after the picnic?
23. ABBY: Land! I never heard about that.
24. MARTHA: Well, the whole kit and kaboodle of them got so sick they had to call the doctor.....and I hear that the Judge himself was so weak afterwards, that he couldn't hold court for two days.
25. ABBIE: Well, what did the doctor say it was, anyway?
26. MARTHA: He called it food poisoning.....but I think he was just being polite and didn't want to say it was ptomaine.
27. MUSIC: IT AIN'T NECESSARILY SO.....SNEAK IT IN UNDER NEXT SPEECH.
28. ABBIE: Mercy must have been something they ate at the picnic.
Well.....my conscience is clear.....I know that everything that went into my coconut custard pies was fresh..... besides the pies would have looked queer or tasted funny if anything was wrong.
29. MUSIC: UP AND OUT.
30. HOLLY: Then it was those coconut custard pies that gave those people ptomaine poisoning, Mrs. Freyman?

31. FREYMAN: Yes and no, Holly. The custard pies were at the root of the trouble because they had stood without refrigeration for hours. But the Green family had food poisoning. Nobody ever gets real ptomaine poisoning.
32. HOLLY: Well...a lot of people go round talking about ptomaine.
33. FREYMAN: I know they do. But the Food and Drug Administration people told me that ptomaines are chemicals that form when protein foods are in the last stages of decay. And food that spoils so badly that ptomaines form... just wouldn't look like food any more.
34. HOLLY: A rather disgusting thought...if you'll pardon my saving so.
35. FREYMAN: That's just the point. The least squeamish person in the world would never think of touching any food like that...assuming he'd ever come across any such food in this day and age. So you can see why there aren't any cases of real ptomaine poisoning on record.
36. HOLLY: Well what is it that people have when they call it "ptomaine" and how did it ever get to be called ptomaine anyway?
37. FREYMAN: Well it is a form of food poisoning. But the idea of calling it "ptomaine poisoning" is just a hangover from years and years ago when people thought it was these ptomaine chemicals that were doing the damage. Incidentally, Holly, the first half of the word ptomaine comes from the Greek word meaning..(LOWERS VOICE MYSTERIOUSLY)..corpse.

38. HOLLY: (SHUDDERS) Brrrrr. After your description of ptomaines, I can see the poetic justice...or something...But...I still don't know what food poisoning is...or why people get it.
39. FREYMAN: Well about fifteen years ago, scientists found out that certain tiny germs called staphylococci cause most of the cases of food poisoning.
40. HOLLY: Staphylo...whatever -it-is...sounds pretty bad. What do they look like?
41. FREYMAN: Oh we can't see them, Holly...except under a microscope. But they're around. In fact this particular germ is found almost everywhere...on our skin...in the air...on things we touch...
42. HOLLY: (WEAK VOICE)... I think I'd better lie down...I don't feel so good.
43. FREYMAN: Don't be silly, Holly. This particular germ can't hurt you unless you eat food in which the bacteria have grown and formed a poison.
44. HOLLY: I feel better. Then, Mrs. Freyman, those coconut custard pies were filled with those staph...those particular germs?
45. FREYMAN: Very likely, Holly.
46. HOLLY: But the pies looked all right and tasted fine...or the people wouldn't have eaten them.
47. FREYMAN: That's right...you can't see or taste anything different. That's why we have the Federal Food and **Drugs** Act...generally called the "pure food law"...Here's a brief statement of the Act. Read it, Holly.

48. HOLLY: The Federal Food and Drugs Act forbids traffic in any food that is adulterated because of added harmful ingredients...or because it is filthy, putrid, or decomposed. The law applies to foods shipped in interstate commerce...manufactured, sold, or offered for sale in the District of Columbia or any of the territories...or imported into the United States. And there is no arguing with the law, Mrs. Freyman.
49. FREYMAN: No indeed, Holly. So when a case of food poisoning breaks out...you can be pretty sure that it was because of carelessness, not because the food wasn't wholesome in the beginning.
50. HOLLY: It was probably because the food hadn't been kept in the refrigerator...like those custard pies.
51. FREYMAN: Or like soup that sits around a hot kitchen for several hours without refrigeration or potato salads or cream puffs...or warm milk...or cooked meats and chicken...in fact any perishable food that isn't refrigerated right away.
52. HOLLY: It all comes right back to careless handling of food.
53. FREYMAN: Mmm hmm...the Food and Drug people said that practically all the cases of food poisoning they've investigated, proved to be the result of carelessness by the person preparing the food...either in the home or a public kitchen.
54. HOLLY: So the best safety first rule for hot weather is... "Keep perishable foods cold."

55. FREYMAN: That's right. And if you're not going to eat cooked foods right away, cool them quickly and store them covered in the icebox. Another good rule is to keep food clean. Make sure that the kitchen is clean...the dishes...your hands...in fact everything that comes in contact with the food. Keep them clean.
56. HOLLY: Those are good rules for all year round, Mrs. Freyman. But do you have any other tips that apply especially in the summer?
57. FREYMAN: Well, I think it might be helpful to talk about special protection for picnic foods.
58. HOLLY: Well, I have a picnic hamper with a compartment for holding ice...and a thermos jug...because my family goes on a lot of picnics.
59. FREYMAN: That's a good idea. But with a little ingenuity the family of occasional picnickers can protect their food just as well.
60. HOLLY: Sure...I should think a pail with ice in it would do the trick.
61. FREYMAN: Mmm hmm...or a tub with ice. Then you have to be sure you wrap the food securely in waxed paper...or you can put the food in jars. The important thing is to make sure it keeps cold right up until eating time.
62. HOLLY: That takes care of picnics...but you said something before about people wasting perfectly good food...just because it looks suspicious.
63. FREYMAN: Or because they believe some silly superstition about food. For instance, what do you think of the combination of milk and fish, Holly?

64. HOLLY: Separately...fine.! But together...(NEGATIVE) uh uh.
65. MUSIC: IT AIN'T NECESSARILY SO...UP AND OUT
66. HOLLY: Oh oh...I guess I said the wrong thing.
67. FREYMAN: Yes, you did. And if you stop and think a minute, I'm sure you'll realize what a silly superstition that is. Do you like clam chowder?
68. HOLLY: (HESITANTLY) Ye-es.
69. FREYMAN: And oyster stew?
70. HOLLY: Ye-es.
71. FREYMAN: Well...how could you have them without milk?
72. HOLLY: You can't but...Shucks, next thing you'll tell me is that carrots won't make my hair curly.
73. FREYMAN: No sir. Next you're going to hear about some of the wonders of nature...molds and rainbow meats.
74. SOUND: TELEPHONE RINGS
75. DOTTY: Hello, Mother?
76. MOTHER: (ON FILTER) Yes, dear, How are you?
77. DOTTY: I'm fine...and Henry's fine...but Mother, I'm simply furious with you...honestly...
78. MOTHER: Why Dotty...calm down...whatever is the matter?
79. DOTTY: You didn't tell me about this...and I tried so hard...
80. MOTHER: Child...child...have you and Henry had a quarrel?
81. DOTTY: Don't be silly, Mother...we haven't had a fight during the whole three months we've been married...I'm talking about food.
82. MOTHER: (RELIEVED) Oh...food.

83. DOTTY: Yes food...I thought you had told me the right way to store foods. But Mother this morning I've had more trouble with moldy food...Just listen to what I had to throw out...a big piece of cheddar cheese...and
84. MOTHER: (INTERRUPTS) Oh darling...that was foolish. You could just cut away the moldy part...and the cheese would be as good as new.
85. DOTTY: But Mother it was moldy!
86. MOTHER: Well honey, I don't know much about molds...but I know that it doesn't hurt cheese...Didn't you ever eat roquefort cheese, Dotty ...
87. DOTTY: Yes ...but...
88. MOTHER: Well that blue-green streak in roquefort cheese is mold... but it isn't harmful.
89. DOTTY: Well...that wasn't all Mother. I had to throw out a whole loaf of bread too. I know it's wasteful...but I didn't dare eat it.
90. MOTHER: I don't see how it could get moldy if you kept it in the iccbox like I told you.
91. DOTTY: Oh...did you tell me that? I guess I forgot.
92. MOTHER: And Dotty, if it wasn't very much mold, you could have just thrown the bad part out...and the rest of the bread would be fine.
93. DOTTY: Well, there was only a little dot of mold on one slice... but I thought it ruined the whole loaf.
94. MOTHER: Well you'll know better next time dear...and if you keep your bread in the refrigerator...and keep it wrapped well... there won't be any next time.

95. DOTTY: But Mother...(GETTING MEEKER ALL THE TIME) You haven't heard the rest yet. Mother, is mold on bacon like mold on bread?
96. MOTHER: I don't know exactly...but I'm sure it's all right to scrape off the mold...it's only on the surface.. Don't tell me you....
97. DOTTY: (VERY HUMBLE) Yes I did....a whole half pound of bacon... right in the garbage pail.
98. MOTHER: Well, don't feel badly about it, baby...if it's done, it's done.
99. DOTTY: I think the worst is yet to come...if you tell me I was stupid and threw out all that leftover roast beef, I'll never cook again.
100. MOTHER: What's this about roast beef?
101. DOTTY: It's the first we've had in ages...We ate some of it for dinner yesterday. And I saved the rest for today...oh, in the refrigerator of course.
102. MOTHER: (TINGE OF SARCASM) Yes, dear, of course.
103. DOTTY: But today when I took it out...it had turned color... almost rainbow colors.
104. MOTHER: Oh that does sound bad! I never heard of that. Did it have an odor?
105. DOTTY: Well...I sniffed and sniffed at it...like a hungry dog... but all it had was a good tantalizing roast beef smell. But those colors.
106. MOTHER: Well what did you do...
107. DOTTY: What would you have done, Mother? I threw it out.
108. MOTHER: I'm sure you did just right.....



109. MUSIC: IT AIN'T NECESSARILY SO...BRIDGE
110. HOLLY: From the music, Mrs. Freyman, I gather this isn't a case of "Mother is always right."
111. FREYMAN: Well, Dotty's mother was right about everything...until she got to rainbow meats.
112. HOLLY: I must admit that I'd never seen any cooked meat with any kind of technicolor effect. So I'd probably be suspicious too.
113. FREYMAN: It really isn't unusual to see a play of colors on sliced cooked meats...particularly cured meats. So if you do, don't worry about it. The U. S. Department of Agriculture says that effect in fresh or cured cooked meat is perfectly harmless.
114. HOLLY: Well, what makes the meat turn color, Mrs. Freyman?
115. FREYMAN: As a matter of fact, the meat isn't colored at all, Holly. It's really the breaking up of light that we see...as the light hits the fine muscle fibers in the meat.
- (POSSIBLE CUT BEGINS HERE) Did you ever study physics, Holly?
116. HOLLY: A little...
117. FREYMAN: Well, do you remember how you can break up white light into all the colors of the rainbow?
118. HOLLY: Sure, just by shining it through one of those glass screens with thousands of lines in it.
119. FREYMAN: Well, it's the same with meats. If the light strikes some meats in a certain way, the fibers of the meat...or the fat film, do the same job as the lines in the glass screen. (END OF TENTATIVE CUT)

120. HOLLY: Isn't that the same kind of color effect you see in clamshells or oysters...and sometimes the feathers of birds?
121. FREYMAN: Mmm hmm...and they tell me aviators often see iridescent clouds...the same effect as white light breaking up into rainbow colors. So if you do see any rainbows in your cooked meat...don't chuck it into the garbage pail. It's perfectly good food.
122. HOLLY: Well, Mrs. Freyman, I think you chose a good theme song for today's program, because we really showed up a lot of food superstitions that cause waste.
123. FREYMAN: We talked about so many ideas about food, I think we'd better kind of take inventory...and sort out the right ideas from the wrong. Let's see which ones "ain't necessarily so."
124. HOLLY: Ptomaine poisoning is the sickness you get from eating spoiled food.
125. MUSIC: JUST FIRST STRAIN...IT AIN'T NECESSARILY SO.
126. FREYMAN: But you can get food poisoning from perishable foods that have not been refrigerated properly...especially in hot weather. Next.
127. HOLLY: Throw away cheese that has mold on it.
128. MUSIC: REPEAT FIRST STRAIN...IT AIN'T NECESSARILY SO.
129. FREYMAN: Most molds on cheese are harmless. Molds give some cheeses, like roquefort, their fine flavor. You can cut off the moldy portion on other cheeses. Next.
130. HOLLY: Even a little mold on bread or meat is harmful.
131. MUSIC: REPEAT

132. FREYMAN: You'd find the taste of the mold unpleasant, but if you discard the moldy part, the rest of the food is perfectly safe. Next.
133. HOLLY: The illusion of rainbow colors on meat is harmful.
134. MUSIC: REPEAT
135. FREYMAN: That winds up all our ain't necessarily so's...because that rainbow effect on meat is perfectly all right. It's the reflections of light we see...and not colors in the meat itself.
136. MUSIC: IT AIN'T NECESSA...AIN'T NECESSA-SARILY SO...(END ON HIGH NOTE.)
137. HOLLY: But know one thing that is so, Mrs. Freyman...and that's that next week we're going to tell the story of school lunches.
138. FREYMAN: That's right. Congress recently passed a permanent National School Lunch Act which provides 75 million dollars for school lunches for the coming year. So next week we're going to tell how every community can have a school lunch program.
139. HOLLY: So be sure to be with us next Saturday for another edition of
140. SOUND: CASH REGISTER.
141. ANNCR. CONSUMER TIME.
142. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER.

143. ANNCR.

CONSUMER TIME, written by Eleanor Miller, and directed by Frederick Schweikher, is presented by the U. S. Department of Agriculture through the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations.

It comes to you from Washington, D. C.

Motorists, if you still have tired rubber tires on your automobile, the National Safety Council asks you to keep in mind that hot weather and friction-heat from fast driving are hard on those tires. And blowouts are dangerous...more so when you're going fast. So, keep your speed down, conserve your tires and avoid an accident.

This is the National Broadcasting Company.

